

Transportation battalion dedicates memorial at Mannheim

By [Steve Mraz](#), Stars and Stripes
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MANNHEIM, Germany — Forever grateful and never forgotten.

Those words along with several others grace the centerpiece at the 28th Transportation Battalion Memorial Park in tribute to the battalion's soldiers who died, fought and continue to fight in the global war on terror.

A ceremony took place Monday to dedicate the park on Coleman Barracks in Mannheim. That the ceremony occurred on the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks was no mere coincidence.

"We thought how appropriate to dedicate our memorial on 9/11 literally five years to the day," said Lt. Col. Stephen E. Farmen, 28th Transportation Battalion commander. "I think that captures the essence of what we've all been up against in the last five years, fighting the war on terror."

The memorial inscription rests atop a granite stone, symbolizing the strength and vigilance of the griffin on the 28th Transportation Battalion crest.

Of particular note are the three benches in the park that each bear the name of one of the three battalion soldiers who died while serving in Iraq. Sgt. Tatjana Reed and Spc. Torey J. Dantzler, both of the 66th Transportation Company, were killed July 22, 2004, when a roadside bomb attack in Samarra, Iraq, destroyed their Humvee. Spc. Douglas E. Kashmer, of the 70th Transportation Company, died June 8, 2005, near Nippur, Iraq, about 100 miles south of Baghdad, when the wrecker in which he was riding rolled over.

"The least we can do is immortalize what they mean to us — for now and for future generations of 28th Transportation Battalion soldiers," Farmen said. "This is a constant reminder to us that they didn't die in vain. We have to continue to serve with honor and move forward for their sake and the sake of our nation."

Farmen and Silvia Britz, Reed's aunt and guardian of Reed's young daughter, placed a floral wreath on the memorial during the ceremony Monday.

Since 2003, nine organic companies of the 28th Transportation Battalion have been deployed to various locations throughout Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. The 28th Transportation Battalion headquarters recently returned from a yearlong deployment to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Throughout their operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom deployments, 28th Transportation Battalion soldiers have earned more than 778 combat action badges and 27 Purple Hearts, Farmen said.

"It is our hallowed duty to fight on with the same strength and vigilance as those to this date have so that the sacrifice of those killed or wounded did not happen in vain," he said.



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Lt. Col. Stephen E. Farnen, left, 28th Transportation Battalion commander, and Silvia Britz, aunt of the late Sgt. Tatjana Reed, place a wreath Monday on the newly dedicated 28th Transportation Battalion memorial in Mannheim, Germany. Reed, a soldier with the 66th Transportation Company, died July 22, 2004, while serving in Iraq.



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A plaque and ribbon on one of three park benches at the 28th Transportation Battalion Memorial Park in Mannheim, Germany, that memorialize the battalion's three soldiers who have died while serving in Iraq.



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The 28th Transportation Battalion Memorial Park was dedicated Monday on the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.